

# *in edition*

MAY 14, 1992

VOL.9 NO.17

## The State of the University

*The following is the text of the "State of the University" message that President Marsha Hanen delivered to the Staff and Faculty Forum on April 14.*

### THE PAST TWO YEARS - A REVIEW

Two years ago, as most of you will recall, I spoke at three meetings about the state of the university. In particular, we were about to begin the work of the President's Committee on the Future of the University, and I tried to provide a discussion of the issues that I thought needed to be addressed, under the headings of Academic Directions, Organization, and Budget and Planning. My aim was to set the stage for the work that was to be undertaken within the University over the following year, and to provide some idea of what I thought we particularly needed to keep in mind as that work progressed.

Since that time, we have had a number of major developments in the University. We have had the reports of the Accessibility Task Force, the Futures Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women, and recommendations from all three are currently in various stages of implementation, or are before various bodies for their further recommendation. We have a new Mission Statement for the University, which has been approved by Senate and the Board of Regents, and we are committed, I believe, to using the Mission Statement to help us to determine our priorities in relation to all that we do, both in academic programs and in service to our students and our community. We have a new policy on sexual harassment,

with an officer and advisory committee to implement it. We are in the process of implementing some changes to our administrative structure, and will soon be welcoming a new Vice-President (Academic).

We have had three operating grants at a level substantially below our inflationary costs, but we have also had some significant help from the Universities Grants Commission, especially last year in the form of specifically

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targeted funds in addition to our base grant, and in the form of special monies which allowed us to repair the leaking roofs and enclose space for student study purposes and for the library. We have also managed to continue to provide a first-rate undergraduate education to nearly 7,500 full and part-time students annually, to enhance our research and scholarly productivity, and to provide outstanding service to our community.

Two years ago I ventured the thought that things might one day quieten down on the third floor of Wesley Hall. I no longer entertain that expectation for any of us in the University, even momentarily, for it is clear to me that we are all being inundated with more and more demands, more and more things that need to be accomplished without any signifi-

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cant increases in the wherewithal, either human or financial, with which to do it. I am troubled by this, because I recognize that work cannot expand indefinitely, and difficult choices must be made about what we can and cannot do. But I want you to know that I am still enjoying my own role with all the challenges and changes inherent in it, and I remain optimistic about the future of our University, and about our ability to maintain the human side of ourselves through all the stresses.

From the perspective of two and a half years as president, it seems to me that we have much that should make us proud, and many accomplishments to our credit. However, rather than list these here, I refer you to the reports that we prepare annually for the Universities Grants Commission and for the Board of Regents, including our audited financial statements. The last two years of these reports are available from my office; the 1991-92 reports will be available at the end of June.

Following on the three State of the University meetings we held in the spring of 1990, in order to provide opportunities for input to the process, there were five open meetings during the rest of 1990 and 1991 - one each on the Accessibility Report and the Sexual Harassment Policy, and three on preliminary documents from the Futures Committee. I, therefore, did not think it appropriate to arrange another meeting on the state of the University in 1991; however, it seems to me that it would probably be useful for us to have two general meetings annually - one in the fall and one in the spring, in order to ensure one kind of information flow and exchange, among many. For this year, I wanted to provide a State of the University message in the spring, with a focus on a few issues that seem to me particularly important at this time. In the autumn, I shall

provide follow-up on some of these, if that is appropriate, as well as some idea of what I think may be engaging us over the next academic year and, perhaps, an opportunity to come together informally.

## PLANNING

### Curriculum Review

Today I want to address several issues, all within a planning context. First, I would urge that we all remember that planning is an ongoing activity, that plans change as conditions change, and that planning must, particularly in the present economic climate, be both realistic and strategic. In this context, the first and most important project on which we are presently engaged is the curriculum review. I believe this is progressing well, and I look forward to seeing some of what

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the various groups working on the review are considering. A few weeks ago, at the conference we held here on our campus with our colleagues from Charles University in Prague, I spoke about changing university curricula in a context of changes in our ways of thinking about our disciplines, and a number of you have indicated that what I said on that occasion

may be useful as we develop our curriculum review further. I thought that I might try today to say something more generally about curriculum and how I think the present review fits with some of the other issues we are currently facing.

Disciplinary change is a phenomenon with which all academics are familiar. Most obvious, perhaps, is the way in which ongoing work in the sciences changes our view of the nature of the world, but examples in the social sciences and humanities abound as well. These changes, as everyone knows, are by no means simple replacements of what-we-once-thought-was-true with what-we-now-know-to-be-true; indeed, intellectual change is fraught with controversy and disagreement. In my own field of philosophy, for example, there are today strong proponents of foundationalism and anti-foundationalism, essentialism and anti-essentialism, realism and anti-realism, and so on. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that these debates will ever be settled, even if it is possible to discern patterns, and to see that one of each of these pairs may be in the ascendancy at any given time. If we look at the history of the discipline, we see a similar phenomenon:



*The Universities Grants Commission provided special funds to repair roofs and create new study areas in the library.*

even in times when empiricism seems to hold sway, its proponents have their rationalist critics, and vice versa.

What interests me about all of this is not so much the intellectual swings as the question of whether it is possible to think in ways that are not so rigidly dichotomous, and whether it is even possible in our intellectual lives to come to terms with a more holistic way of approaching the questions that exercise us. The world does not come neatly packaged under the labels that coincide with our disciplinary divisions, and what concerns me is that, insofar as we do not pay explicit attention in our curriculum to this fact, we may be doing our students a disservice.

No doubt it is incumbent on us to prepare those of our students who intend to go on immediately to graduate studies in the discipline of their undergraduate degrees in such a way as to ensure their success in that venture. This, in a way, goes without saying. But many if not most of our students have no such intention; yet such students are not, as we all know, intrinsically less intellectually able than their graduate school bound colleagues. One of the questions we must ask ourselves, is what kind of education our students, graduating in the mid or late 1990s, should have in order for them to be able to lead fulfilling and productive lives, and in order for them to be able to make significant contributions to this or some other community.

Much has been written about the value of liberal arts and science education in developing in students the capacity for critical thinking, problem solving and flexibility - all qualities much in demand in the current economy. Much has also been written about the extent to which the world in which our students will be living and working requires an ability to make connections, to see interrelationships among issues that might, initially, have seemed disparate, and to deal with complexity. These are skills that we in universities have usually been content to leave to students themselves, supposing, perhaps, that if they have the various bits of knowledge gained from exposure to separate disciplines, they will do the integrating themselves. Indeed, many do, as many of us did before them. But it is also true that many do not, as many of us did not, and the question before us is whether we should be seeing our responsibilities to our students in these times as including a responsibility to help them perceive interrelationships in order to help them to be able to approach complex problems in an integrative way.

The atmosphere of significant and even profound disciplinary change in which we are all working seems to me to provide us with extraordinary opportunities, not to say impediments, to rethink our curricula. It provides us with an opportunity

to examine both what we teach and how we teach it, to consider whether all that we do is necessary, and whether there might in some cases be better ways, both from the point of view of content and from the point of view of form, to prepare our students. We have an opportunity to ask whether there are things that all undergraduates should be learning, and if so, how these should be characterized. We have an opportunity to ask not only how our curricula can include both depth in some area and breadth across a number of areas, but also whether the characterization of areas in which depth is important could be differently conceived, and whether the kind of breadth we are seeking might include interrelationships among

disciplines or approaches to knowledge rather than merely exposure to separate disciplines.

One of my strongest memories from the first few weeks of my presidency of

The University of Winnipeg was the sense of intellectual interaction among faculty members from all over the University. I recall several occasions on which I thought it quite wonderful to come upon people from widely diverse disciplines discussing aspects of their work that they had in common, or just showing interest in one another's work. This, to me, is much of what one means when one speaks of a sense of community in a university. Although I think we do have a good foundation for this sort of sharing among faculty, there is much more that we could do, and certainly much that could be done to extend this sense of community to students. It is a great strength that students are encouraged to work with faculty and are provided opportunities to engage in research, but we can probably do more, if we wish, to bring together students studying in different areas to explore varying ways of approaching particular subject matter, and to engage in the most important conversations of our day about changing knowledge and changing approaches to knowledge.

There is a considerable body of literature on university curricula designed to specify some of what might be done in order to better prepare students for a rewarding and responsible life as citizens of a highly complex and integrated, technologically oriented society. Such works are often quite inspirational even if the actual changes made to curricula usually end up being a rather minor reshuffling and renaming. We have an extraordinary opportunity for quite significant revision if we want to seize it, and I am convinced that a thorough, ongoing re-examination of what we teach and how we do so can significantly improve the education of our students and help us to remain in the forefront of undergraduate education in Canada.

The ability to cross disciplinary boundaries with some confidence, to use what they have learned to develop new and

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innovative approaches to their work and to solve practical problems are all things that will stand our graduates in good stead. Equally important is the ability to make clear, orally or in writing, material that might be difficult to understand because of its technical or otherwise unfamiliar nature. We have already made considerable strides with our Writing Program, which has been singled out, as you know, for national attention by Stuart Smith in his report on university education in Canada.

Further positive steps are underway, in the form of the work that is being done both university wide and in departments on the curriculum. I would urge that we continue to think as much as possible of the University as a whole over the next months, and that we be prepared to revisit what we do, working back and forth between the macro and the micro levels until we reach an acceptable equilibrium. A number of worthwhile special activities either have taken place to help this process along, or will soon take place. I think particularly of the workshop held a year or so ago on writing in the disciplines, and the ongoing consultations on this subject, of the workshop held last fall with Dr. Richard Light on assessment, and of the workshops held recently on integrating critical thinking instruction into the curriculum. My hope is that the actual bringing forward of preliminary results of the curriculum review will be characterized by openness to ideas, both old and new, and by willingness to subject some of our most cherished beliefs to discussion among our colleagues with a view to making even better the education on which we quite rightly pride ourselves.



*The University must prepare today's students for a complex and technologically oriented society.*

## Library

Let me turn now to a more specific discussion of some matters about which concern has been expressed, either recently or over a much longer period. I begin with the library. I am well aware that there has been considerable worry, over a long period of time, about the ability of the library to purchase a reasonable proportion of the material it needs. There have been, in our university as in most others, cuts to journal subscriptions, and difficult choices to be made about book purchases. There may be no completely satisfactory solution

to these problems short of truly massive infusions of funds, which is not likely to happen; but I believe there is quite a lot that can be done to improve the situation, and I wanted to share with you the steps that are being taken.

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First, of course, is the matter of resource sharing. The resource sharing agreement between our library and that of the University of Manitoba is now in operation, as are a number of other resource sharing arrangements calculated to make materials easily and quickly available for our faculty and students. This cooperative effort needs to be enhanced on an ongoing basis, and I believe we are committed to doing that.

Second, it seems clear that the acquisitions part of the library budget needs to be protected, and, to that end, we have arranged to separate that part of the budget from other non-salary items, and to provide a larger proportional increase in the acquisitions part than we can manage in other parts. This is intended as a recognition both of the importance of library acquisitions, and of constantly escalating costs in this area. The intent is to provide annual increases to the acquisitions portion of the library budget on the order of, say, 6 or 8 percent in times when other non-salary budgets can increase only, say, 2 or 3 percent. This is a way of doing what we can to protect the purchasing power of the library acquisitions budget.

Third, we have, as I believe you all know, started a library endowment fund. This was begun with some bequest and capital campaign funds, as well as some special gifts. The target for this fund is \$1 million, with the aim of spending approximately five percent annually and capitalizing interest earned over the five percent as a hedge against inflation and a way of building up the fund. This year

we have designated the library endowment fund as one of the special areas of giving for our annual campaign, and I hope that, with this device and some special gifts, we can build the fund over the next few years. Presently it stands at about \$300,000.

### Funding - Government Grants

The general matter of funding is something on which I also want to report in some detail. As everyone is only too well aware, government grants on both the operating and capital sides are not keeping up with inflationary costs. The last three grants have been four percent, 3.3 percent and three percent to the university sector overall, and this represents an inclusive figure - general operating, first claims, pay equity, and capital, both regular and major, so that the actual operating grant has been well below these figures. It is important to note, however, that last year our total operating grant was somewhat higher than the overall figure, with some \$300,000 of specially targeted funds intended to help us to deal with our most pressing needs, primarily on the academic staff side. As well, the funding for our roof repair was a special grant, provided outside the regular estimates process. Given that our costs have been rising by something like seven-eight percent annually, there has been a substantial gap, and this has been filled primarily through increases in student fees.

In the present economic and political climate, it seems clear that, notwithstanding our continuing attempts to make our particular needs clear to government, it would be unrealistic to anticipate substantially greater increases in the next few years, and, indeed, there are signs that we may be facing

even greater decreases in financial support from governments. That means, in practical terms, that we shall have to continue to be extremely careful with our finances, and we shall have to make very difficult choices among our priorities. When there are funds available, it will be important to commit them, as much as possible, to one-time expenditures rather than incurring ongoing costs which we have no means of building into our expenditure base. It also means that we must become even more sensitive than in the past to the financial pressures on students. In particular, we must do more to lobby for increased financial aid for students from governments, and we must attempt to direct more of our operating monies toward enhanced student aid and employment programs within the University.

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### Private funding is an area that we must develop much more strongly in the future.

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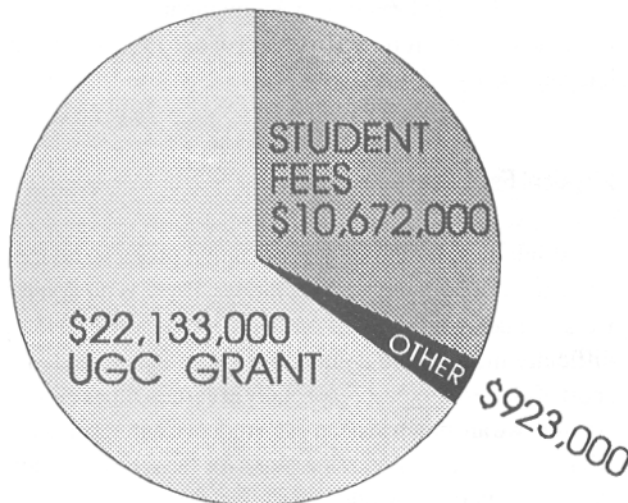
To give one example of the sort of situation we face regularly, our currently identified equipment and renovations needs exceed the fund-

ing available (which is less than \$1 million) by more than \$1.1 million. This is typical: we usually have requests that are more than double the funds available, and this is true again this year. To add to our concern, the regular capital grant was not increased at all this year, and this is the last year of the Manitoba Universities Development Fund, which has been most helpful to us in allowing us to complete some of the upgrading of our campus that has been so evident over the past few years. We, together with other Manitoba universities, have been requesting that the government undertake long-term planning on the capital side, and set aside a successor fund to the MUDF to deal with the pressing problems in these areas, but these requests have not yet been dealt with.

### Private Funding

We have been working hard to develop our private funding, and there has been some considerable progress. Total gifts and pledges to the "Strengthening the Links" Capital Campaign stood at \$7.8 million when I joined the University. The figure is presently on the order of \$9.4 million, which is a considerable achievement without the additional infrastructure of a major campaign and in difficult economic times. We shall be continuing to work until the end of December of 1992, which is the close of the five-year time period for the campaign, to do what we can to bring the total higher. To give you an idea of the kind of funding we have managed over the last year or so, let me provide a few examples. There has been about \$280,000 in bequests, \$165,000 of it for the library and the rest for scholarships, some in Theology; there has been some \$85,000 additional for the library; there have been additional funds for scholarships - probably on the order of \$200,000; there has been a substantial "in kind" donation of computing equipment from Mind Computers; and there has

### SOURCES OF INCOME FOR 1991~92



Total Income = \$33,628,000



*The Library endowment fund recognizes the importance of library acquisitions.*

been the wonderful gift that will allow us to develop Theatre 3C00 into a multi-purpose facility with emphasis on music performance. In addition, of course, there have been some unrestricted gifts, for which we are most grateful, for they provide some flexibility as to use.

Not included in these amounts is the funding that comes through our Annual Campaign, which was reactivated in 1990 after a hiatus during the most concentrated part of the Capital Campaign. The first year elicited a rather modest response, but the 1991 campaign was a great success, bringing in \$108,000, which is the largest amount ever realized by one of our annual campaigns. We believe that this is an important vehicle for us, and have targeted the 1992 campaign at an ambitious \$150,000, which we shall need everyone's help to achieve. We have working with us a group of dedicated volunteers who have

COURSE REGISTRATIONS FOR 1991-92	
Spring/Summer (as of August 1/91)	2,884.5
Regular Academic Session (as of September 15/91)	23,222.5
New Registrations for Second Term	1,027.5
February Session (as of February 2/92)	464.5
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>27,599.0</b>

more strongly in the future, as it is one of the few ways in which we can be certain of being able to provide scholarships, improvements to our programs and of being able to build up our endowment so as to have reliable expectations of, for example, having the capacity to enhance library funding. I hope to be able to spend more of my time in this area over the next couple of years, and I would remind all of you that it is vital that all of our requests be properly co-ordinated, and so anyone with ideas for fund raising for any purpose should consult at the outset with me by dropping me a note. I welcome your suggestions and help, including ideas about a further major campaign - whether we should be moving in that direction, and if so, when and how. I should probably also mention that it is important to be realistic about this type of fundraising: it does not provide relief in any substantial measure to the operating budget or to basic equipment and renovation needs. Few donors wish to give for capital projects that are not high profile, and, as I have indicated on previous occasions, it would require an endowment of \$70 million to generate income to cover 10 percent of our 1992-93 operating budget.

### Physical Facilities

While I am on the subject of capital projects, let me say a few words about physical facilities. There is no doubt that we are much too crowded on this campus. We have great difficulty meeting the demand for office space, and we are short of classroom space, especially at certain times of the day. As well, we are much in need of a Student Centre, and we have what I think are very exciting plans for the redevelopment of the lower part of Riddell Hall for this purpose. I was

been doing research to find lost alumni and donors, and have, in the first two months, located over two hundred. This is very important for us, and I would ask that those of you who may know of alumni who have become "lost" to us contact the Office of University Relations. We need everyone's help. In addition to this project, our volunteers help us with research for stories for our publications such as *in edition* and *the Journal*, and these are very important in maintaining contact with our alumni and friends.

Private funding is an area that we must develop much



particularly disappointed, therefore, that this year's grant did not include funding for the Riddell project, and we shall continue to place that need before the government as well as to look for ways that we can generate some of the funding privately. As well, there is provision for an additional 8,000 square feet of space at the third floor level of the Duckworth Centre, and we are continuing to seek ways to complete that development in order to relieve some of our space problems. The particular physical configuration might make it possible to do this in two sections, one of 5,000 and one of 3,000 square feet, and we are presently examining this possibility. The addition of space of that sort might also provide some flexibility that would allow such things as physical consolidation of student services, and some other space enhancements where departments or services are particularly cramped.

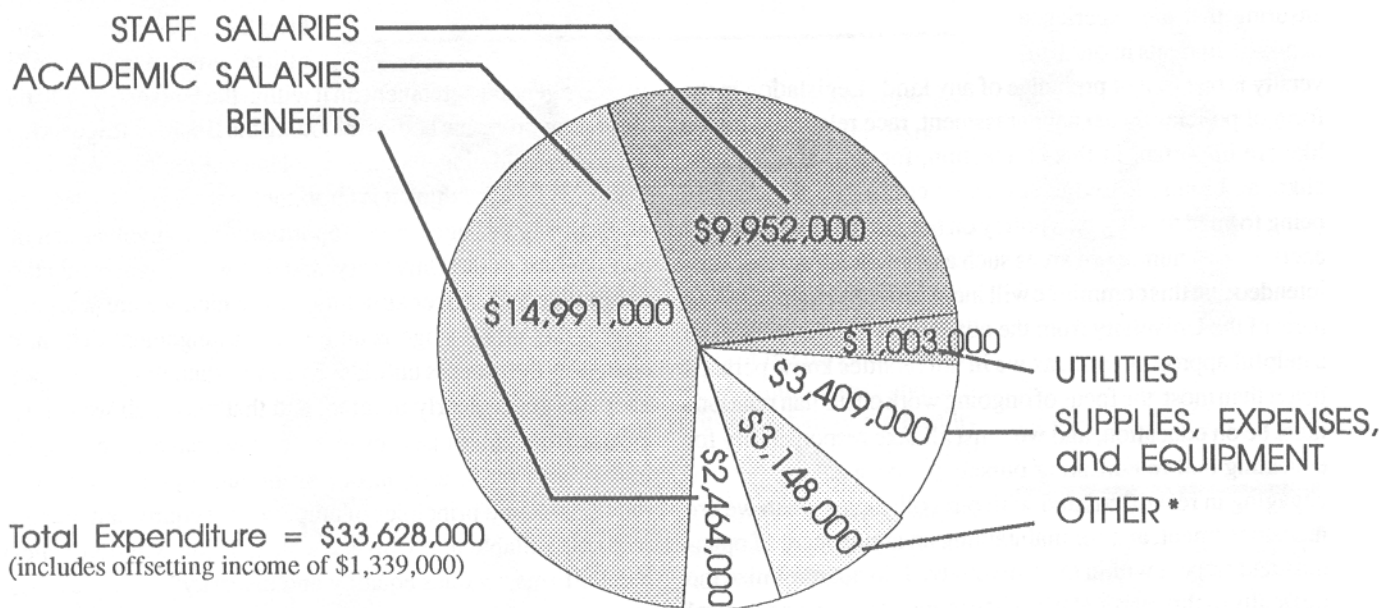
### Organization

Another area which has been a source of some concern within the University has to do with organizational matters. This would not be an appropriate time to revisit all parts of this discussion, but I thought it might be helpful if I made a few comments that have been made before by me and by others in a slightly different form. With respect to the matter of new responsibilities for a Vice-President (Academic), I believe there is some positive excitement about the potential for this change. I think you will all find David Gagan to be a very

approachable person, with a deep appreciation of the importance of broad consensus within the University. He and I are both very much aware of the concern that this move may introduce an additional "layer" of administration, and I can assure you that, as we negotiate whatever changes seem to be required, we shall be extremely careful not to add bureaucracy or impediments to communication.

On the matter of the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, I have indicated in numerous places that, although the structure proffered in the Futures Committee Report has a number of things to recommend it, there are several alternative ways in which one might organize the office, and decisions about this can be made once we have completed the search process that is presently underway. It seems to me that this matter can be addressed afresh, free of preconceived ideas even about how many Assistant or Associate Deans there should be, let alone about how they should be configured. It is even possible that we shall want to try an arrangement for a specified period of time, and shift to another later on if that shows promise of working better. Perhaps the main thing to be said at this time is that I believe that the fear I have heard expressed, that the suggested structure was "the thin end of the wedge" in a move to split the Faculty, is unfounded. I can certainly see why this concern would develop, and there is no doubt that there is some sentiment within the University in favor of a split, but the particular

## AREAS OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1991~92



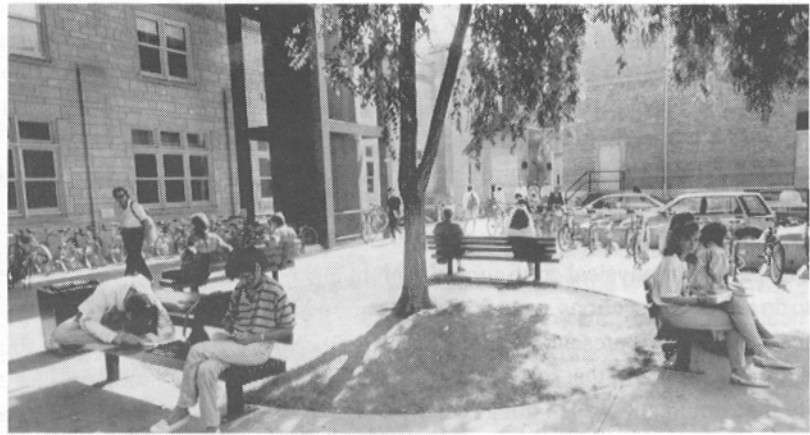
\* "Other" includes debt expense, p/r tax, and library acquisitions.

structure put forward was actually intended explicitly to reaffirm a commitment to retaining a unitary Faculty. There may well be better ways to do this while also meeting some other identified needs, and I believe the process is entirely open to that.

Finally, under the general heading of organization, the new position of Dean of Student Services will be an extremely important one which is also likely to bring with it some significant changes. The actual working out of what will fall within this Dean's purview and how it will be organized remains open, and we have tried to use language of co-ordination rather than of supervision and reporting in order to make that clear. It will be crucial in both Deans' positions to have persons capable of working in a collegial way with all those affected as we proceed over the next year or so.

### Human Relations & Employment Equity

I want, finally, to say a few words about human relations and employment equity in our University. There is no doubt that we have done quite a lot in recent years in the area of accessibility for students with special needs, and for students from underrepresented groups. Equally, there is little doubt that there is more to be done, particularly by way of ensuring that the experience of all our students in our University is one free of prejudice of any kind. Legislation in the form of policies on sexual harassment, race relations and the like are important in this connection, for staff and students alike, and I am pleased to say that a committee is presently being formed to work on a policy on human relations that will encompass a number of areas such as race and ethnicity. It is intended that this committee will include involvement from all parts of the University from the outset, and I think this will be a helpful approach. Still, as we in universities know perhaps better than most, the focus of ongoing work on human relations must be on education, and we must all take responsibility for educating and re-educating ourselves, for speaking out and engaging in real discussion with our colleagues when we are in disagreement, and for maintaining an atmosphere of openness and respect within the University. I do not minimize the difficulty of this, particularly when issues of power and control are involved, and when people on one side or the other of an



*Improvements in student services and amenities continue to be a priority at The University of Winnipeg.*

issue appear unwilling to hear what others are saying; but this is all the more reason that colleagues need to be willing to speak, to mediate, and to try to keep conversation going, even when conditions become tense. We must learn to recognize subtle as well as overt forms of silencing to which women, aboriginal people, members of minorities and so on have been subjected over long periods of time; and we must find ways to overcome this and other forms of inappropriate treatment in order to improve the climate in which we all work.

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These matters are closely connected with issues of employment equity, to which we are all, I believe, committed. We are presently in the process of developing an employment equity policy for the University by means of a broadly representative committee. Such a policy, once

we have general agreement on it within the University, will be taken to appropriate bodies including the Board of Regents for approval, following which an implementation plan will need to be developed. I think it is important that we see this process as occurring in stages, with opportunities for involvement of all members of the University, and that we recognize that the committee and officer structure with which we are working during this initial stage is an interim arrangement that may change as the process unfolds. The important thing is that we keep our goals clearly in mind, and that we do all we can to ensure from the outset, even before we have a developed policy, that we follow, in our hiring and in our workplace relations, sound principles of employment equity and human relations suitable to a University that, as our Mission Statement affirms, "values equality and diversity".